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DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

Central Intelligence Bulletin

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25 April 1969

State Dept. review completed

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Approved For Release 2004/01/15 : CIA-RDP79T00975A013600020001-8

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No. 0099/69
25 April 1969

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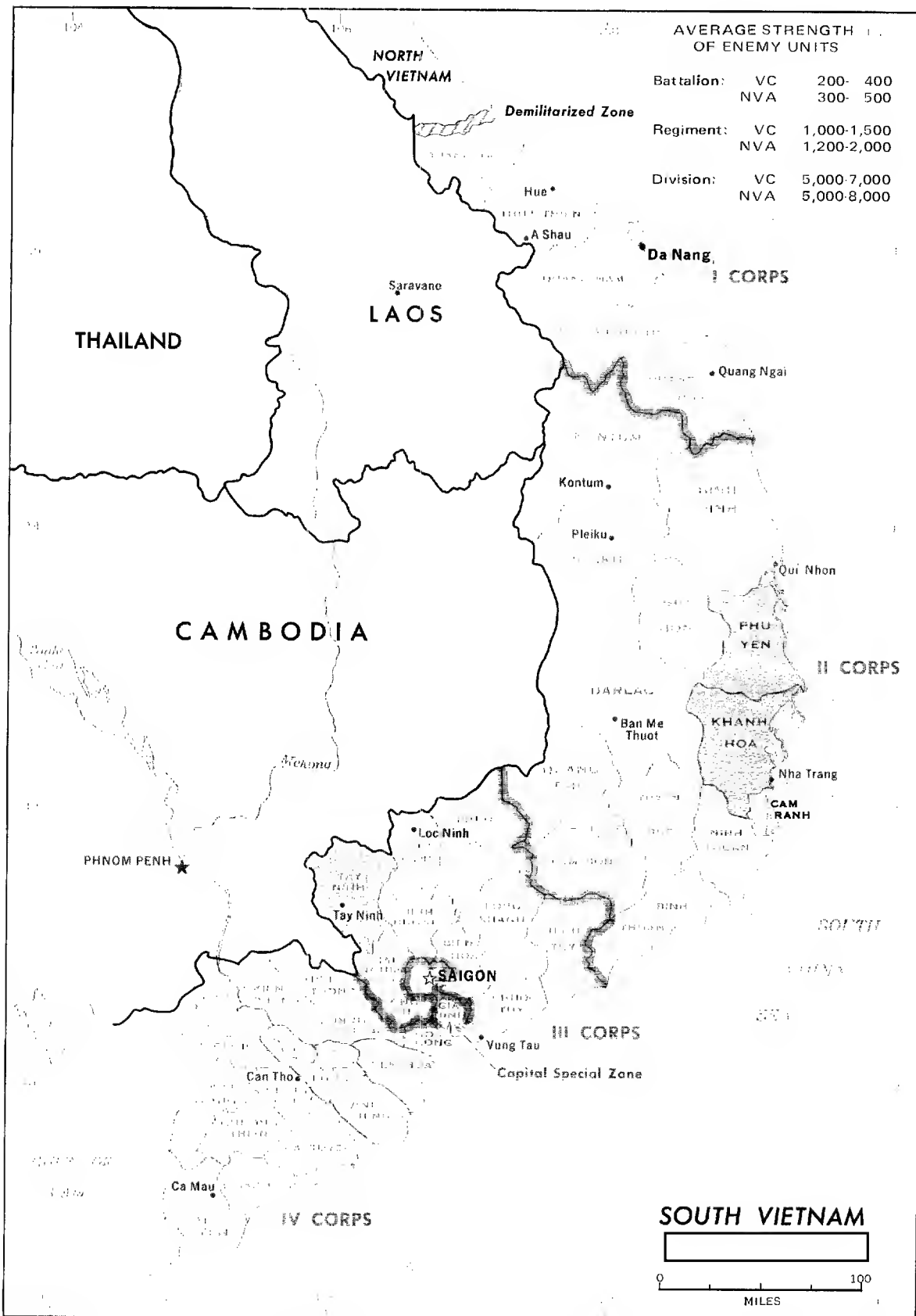


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[South Vietnam: Communist gunners again shelled the US airbase at Da Nang on 23 April.

Six heavy rockets struck the base, resulting in light damages and no casualties. Enemy-initiated activity remains at a low level elsewhere in the country. The heaviest ground action took place just south of the Demilitarized Zone where 12 US Marines and 29 North Vietnamese were killed in three clashes.

Additional evidence of impending Communist attacks has been noted in the I and III Corps areas, the regions where significant enemy initiatives appear most likely in the next few weeks. Informants predict increases in shellings, sapper attacks, and assassinations in Da Nang and southern I Corps as early as the first of May. Northwest of Saigon in Tay Ninh Province indications of attack preparations have again appeared from the North Vietnamese 1st Division.

In the central part of the country the North Vietnamese appear to be reinforcing the provinces along the coast. Two infiltration groups have been detected moving eastward across the central highlands toward Phu Yen and Khanh Hoa provinces in recent days. The Communists severely thinned out their forces in this area last year when they shifted troops southward into the provinces around Saigon.

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North Korea: [The North Korean regime is exploiting the EC-121 incident to justify increases in the defense budget.

The third session of the Supreme People's Assembly convened on schedule in Pyongyang on 24 April in an atmosphere described by the North Korean press as tense, "where all the people are increasing their revolutionary vigilance more than at any other time." In his opening remarks on the 1969 state budget, the finance minister announced that due to the "US provocations," greater resources than originally scheduled had to be devoted to defense expenditures. He also implicitly warned against disagreement with the leadership's latest challenge of the US, by emphasizing that the pronouncement of 23 April on the shootdown was "drawing the unanimous, warm support of all the Korean people."

The 15 April incident apparently is being used domestically by Kim Il-song to silence opponents of his policy of parallel development in industry and defense. Dissatisfaction with the policy had become widespread enough earlier this year for Kim to publish an extensive defense of his program.]

The regime probably also intended the incident to bring into question the wisdom and legitimacy of US reconnaissance flights in the area and also exacerbate US security relations with South Korea and Japan. A Pyongyang news service release on 24 April focused directly on Japanese fears of being dragged into a Korean war because of the Japan-US security treaty. The statement criticized the Japanese Government's support of the US reaction to the incident as "openly taking a hand in moves for the provocation of a new war in Korea." [REDACTED]

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Cambodia-Thailand: Phnom Penh is moving ahead with plans to re-establish diplomatic relations with Bangkok.

An Indonesian diplomat conveyed a Cambodian message to Thai Foreign Minister Thanat on 22 April asking if the Thai were willing to open negotiations leading to re-establishment of relations. Thanat welcomed the Cambodian initiative and accepted Phnom Penh's proposal to send Prime Minister Penn Nouth to Bangkok.

Thanat told the Indonesians that Thailand was willing to recognize Cambodia's borders and would not press its claim to the Preah Vihear border temple. The temple issue has been the major stumbling block between the two countries since 1962, when Phnom Penh severed relations.

Cambodian initiative appears to be part of Sihanouk's current effort to widen his diplomatic options by adopting a more balanced neutrality. Although substantive hurdles between the two countries are minimal, a number of minor issues, including personal animosities between Sihanouk and Thai Deputy Prime Minister Praphat, will have to be kept in check before a rapprochement can take place.

[REDACTED]

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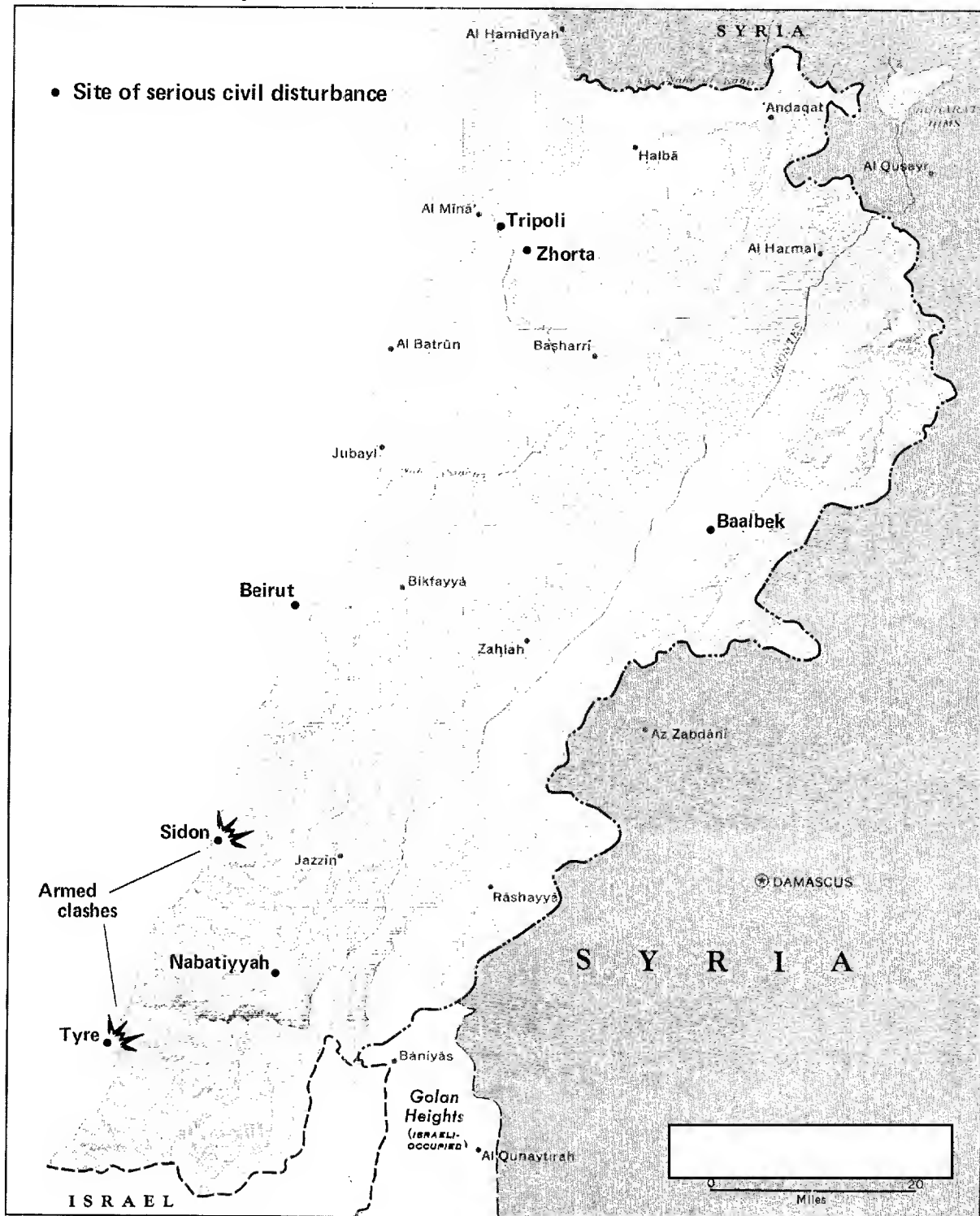
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LEBANON: Pro-Fedayeen Demonstrations Continue



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[Lebanon: The political crisis is deepening in the wake of continued disturbances on the question of controlling the fedayeen.

Prime Minister Karami has announced his resignation during a parliamentary debate in which he was criticized for authorizing government suppression of pro-fedayeen demonstrations. He declared that the country would be divided whether the government allowed the fedayeen freedom to operate from Lebanon or prevented them from doing so.

Earlier, fighting broke out for the second straight day between Lebanese security forces and pro-fedayeen demonstrators. The latest clash in Tyre raised the total of people killed to 12 and the number injured to almost 80. There was also another small clash in Sidon. Curfews have been imposed on Beirut, Tyre, Sidon, Tripoli, Baalbek, and Nabatiyyah. The Christian village of Zhorta in the north has been sealed off to prevent any fighting with Muslims.

If Karami's resignation is accepted, it is unlikely that anyone will be eager to attempt the formation of a new cabinet and the crisis may continue for some time. Should this be for an extended period, it is possible that the army may move in to fill the void. [REDACTED]

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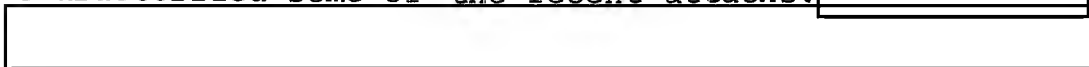
Argentina: A wave of commando-type raids on military and other installations is causing serious concern in the government.

A raid on the federal firing range in the interior city of Cordoba on 1 April has been followed by at least ten other terrorist attacks or attempts by unknown persons to steal arms at widely scattered locations, including military bases throughout the country. One person has been killed and another wounded.

Military and police officials have increased security precautions at armed forces installations and public buildings, but they have not succeeded in halting the incidents. After first attempting to downgrade the seriousness of the attacks, the interior minister told the press on 21 April that the government had come to believe they were politically inspired to create unrest.



If members of the Uruguayan groups are involved, possibly in collaboration with local leftists and extremist Peronists, this might explain in part the degree of organization and daring that has characterized some of the recent attacks.

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Algeria-Spain-Morocco: Coincidental visits to Algiers by Spanish and Moroccan delegations may lead to future three-way collaboration.

At the end of Spanish Foreign Minister Castiella's visit on 23 April, the Algerian press announced the conclusion of an economic agreement providing for the Spanish purchase of substantial quantities of crude oil and chemical products and for a study of the long-dreamed-of underseas gas pipeline. Spain also agreed to cooperate with the development of the Algerian fishing industry, merchant marine, and various agricultural projects.

The joint communiqué issued at the conclusion of Moroccan Prime Minister Benhima's visit, also on 23 April, was generally noncommittal. It did, however, specify that experts should provide by next August "practical and tangible proposals for a joint program of action." King Hassan indicated to the American ambassador that one of Benhima's objectives in Algiers was to probe Algerian intentions regarding the construction of a gas pipeline to Tangier and ultimately to Spain, thus lending some weight to the possibility that tripartite discussions may have already occurred.

Another subject for discussions might have been the Spanish province of Spanish Sahara which has long been coveted by Morocco; the Algerian Government has also indicated a lively interest in the province in recent years. [REDACTED]

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NOTES

Communist China: Initial Chinese press accounts of the ninth party congress, which adjourned on 24 April in Peking, are bland and uninformative. The new central committee has 279 full and alternate members, compared with 170 in the last one formed in 1956. There were no surprises in the list of the top 24 people named in the official communiqué on the congress; the same people have been heading leadership turnouts in Peking for months. Chairman Mao, his designated successor Lin Piao, and Premier Chou En-lai were present at the final session in their usual ranking order. [REDACTED]

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Cyprus: Underground groups apparently are seeking to rekindle enthusiasm for enosis--union with Greece--an issue generally dormant since the removal of most of the Greek mainland troops in early 1968. Their activity is causing concern among Greek Cypriot authorities, who believe it may be aimed against Makarios.

Threats have been made against Greek Cypriot officials who have "abused" the authority of their offices and whom the terrorists regard as traitors to the cause of Hellenism. One group, [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] is believed to have bombed the offices of a Communist-dominated labor federation. Another group may be responsible for the attempted assassination of the Greek Cypriot police chief and for an explosion outside the home of the minister of justice. [REDACTED]

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